5

‘Space-crossed time’: digital photography and cartography in Wolfgang Weileder’s *Atlas*¹

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The places we have known do not belong only to the world of space on which we map them for our own convenience. They were only a thin slice, held between the contiguous impressions that composed our life at that time; the memory of a particular image is but regret for a particular moment; and houses, roads, avenues are as fugitive, alas, as the years. (Proust, 2002: 513)

The creation of an ‘Atlas’ is an ambitious project. The word suggests accuracy in detail and comprehensiveness in scope. It suggests a certain degree of objectivity, despite the recent revolution in cartographic historiography that has emphasised, first, the role that maps play as instruments of power, second, their reliance upon their creator’s particularity and creativity, and third, the need to examine maps within the broader cultural context of their creation and use (Cosgrove, 2008: 156). In 2011 the artist Wolfgang Weileder embarked upon his own *atlas-project*, an artwork which, I argue, reveals much about our relation to contemporary photography and its use online, particularly with regard to digital maps. Certainly Weileder’s *Atlas* sits in line with Cosgrove’s three observations about recent cartographic research: in making his own *Atlas* the artist implies the power that he yields, never attempts to hide his own authorship, and readily invites a detailed cultural and contextual interpretation. This chapter is an endeavour to begin the latter, by considering Weileder’s *Atlas* within both his wider oeuvre and its positioning within contemporary photography and cartography. I suggest that at its heart, Weileder’s *Atlas* reinforces a Proustian emphasis on the ‘slicing’ of time and memory across spatial referents, and that the artist’s ‘constructive’ photographic practice – to use Walter Benjamin’s term – suggests that

Figure 5.1 Wolfgang Weileder, *Gulf of Naples s2912*, 2009, from the *Seascapes* series. Lambda Print, 75 x 154cm © Wolfgang Weileder (courtesy of Wolfgang Weileder). This figure has not been made available under a CC licence. Permission to reproduce it must be sought from the copyright holder.

the contemporary capitalist culture of the instant image is producing a form of illiteracy in experiencing and understanding the nexus between time and space. Maps and digital maps, however Dionysian in character according to geographers Kingsbury and Jones III, can fail to capture this Benjaminian sense of ‘space-crossed time’; Weileder, like Proust, uses art to highlight the coagulation of fugitive years and roads, moments and avenues within human experience.

Space-crossed time

In Wolfgang Weileder’s *Seascapes* (2009–ongoing, see Figure 5.1), time marches steadily on, slice by slice, from left to right. These serene sunset images also function as graphs or ‘waterfall displays’, with time as an unremitting axis along the horizontal plane. Weileder has imposed a secondary rigorous system of recording to that of the photograph, so that the image is constructed as much as captured. The artist takes multiple digital images of the same scene at regular time intervals, and then extracts a one pixel-wide vertical strip from the same point in each photograph, laying the strips out in a row so that the composite image can literally be ‘read’ as a record of day turning into night. While in no way manipulating the initial image caught by the camera, Weileder’s method involves a careful extraction from it, and a subsequent adding together and re-visioning of the photographic records. In doing so, the artist builds a new and abstract composite image. Rather

than the orangey haze of conventional sunset images then, which focus on the nostalgic beauty of a sun soon to disappear, Weileder's *Seascapes* focus upon the effects of the presence or absence of a light source. Rather than photographing, in typical elegiac manner, the glowing transience of a closing day, Weileder's systematic recording across time produces rather than merely preserves the form of the image. The *Seascapes* present a different kind of beauty, with the symmetry of the image marked by a hazy, perfect cross; signalling the intersection of sea, sky, day and night. The coordinates of space and time are overlaid.

Without knowledge of Weileder's method, the *Seascapes* could be read very differently: the blurred edges of the temporal turning point between light and darkness could suggest the phosphorescence of a more physical planetary edge, as if the image had been taken from outer space, and the line between day and night marks instead the boundary between the inhabited world and the blank darkness of space. Reminiscent of Wittgenstein's famous 'duck-rabbit', the *Seascapes* images can transform for the viewer so that the temporal pivot becomes a spatial one as edges in time are read as shifts in space.

The conflation of time-space coordinates is a recurring element in Weileder's oeuvre. Photography's ability to act as a trace of time, to preserve a fleeting configuration of light and shadow, rarely seems enough in Wolfgang Weileder's varied practice. The conventional 'stilling' of photography is not sufficient to convey the intersection of time and space as conceived in his projects, whether photographic or sculptural. This implied dissatisfaction with the preservation enacted by photography resonates with the work of Hiroshi Sugimoto, whose own *Seascapes* (1980–2002) are referred to by Weileder's titling of his series with the same name (Weileder, 2013). Sugimoto's calm, atmospheric black and white photographs of various seas around the world are unified by sharing a consistent horizon line across each image, as if suggesting the immutability of the sea across both space and time (see Figure 5.2). Indeed, Sugimoto has discussed his *Seascapes* as an attempt to photograph that which does not change:

I asked myself, 'can someone today view a scene just as primitive man might have?' The images that came to mind were of Mount Fuji and the Nachi Waterfall in ages past. A hundred thousand or a million years ago, would Mount Fuji have looked so very different than it does today? [...] Unfortunately, the topography has changed. Although the land is forever changing its form, the sea, I thought, is immutable. Thus began my travels back through time to the ancient seas of the world. (Sugimoto, 2010: 109)

Such a search for the unchanging marks Sugimoto's oeuvre, and highlights a curious desire to point the camera, a tool capable of preserving the fleeting instant,

Figure 5.2 Hiroshi Sugimoto, *Seascape: North Atlantic Ocean, Cape Breton*, 1996 © Hiroshi Sugimoto (courtesy of Pace Gallery). This figure has not been made available under a CC licence. Permission to reproduce it must be sought from the copyright holder.

onto the ‘immutable’. It is the reversed relationship between the transient and the permanent in Sugimoto’s *Portraits* series (1999) that produces the eerie quality of the images. Photographs of Madame Tussaud waxwork figures preserve a fleeting view of the unchanging ‘bodies’, so that photography’s oft-discussed relationship to death appears inverted, as if the camera’s flash enlivened rather than entombed the historical figures already rendered resistant to ageing and decay (see Figure 5.3). In both series, Sugimoto suggests a desire to go beyond the preservation offered by photography, as if, as with Weileder’s work, such preservation does not offer enough.

While Sugimoto’s work indicates a dissatisfaction with pointing the camera at fleeting life, Weileder’s work suggests a different dissatisfaction. Consistent within Weileder’s use of photography is the implication that, to use Benjamin’s phrase describing the aura of the photograph, its complex ‘weave of space and time’ is not – or perhaps is no longer – accurate enough (Benjamin, 1999a: 518). This limitation of the photograph is implied to be not only the result

Figure 5.3 Hiroshi Sugimoto, *Henry VIII*, 1999, from the *Portraits* series. Gelatine silver print, 149.2 x 119.4cm © Hiroshi Sugimoto (courtesy of Pace Gallery). This figure has not been made available under a CC licence. Permission to reproduce it must be sought from the copyright holder.

of a withering away of aura at the hands of reproducibility, however. I will argue here that Weileder's projects suggest a dissatisfaction with the time-space coordinates of photography because of the speed, the instantaneous flashes, of our encounters with it. Weileder's *Seascapes* series is both a development of the ongoing *atlas-project* and a turning of it on its head; created using the same method of collating pixel-wide strips, the *Atlas* series focuses upon the activity of public places, with a vertical, rather than horizontal time axis. The resulting abstract images are therefore also maps measuring a particular intersection of geography and temporality (see Figure 5.4). Weileder has emphasised this reading of the *atlas-project* as a form of mapping through both the work's title and his own discussion of the creative process involved, stating that 'my photographic technology tries to combine both a cartographic way of seeing and a photographic representation over a long timescale' (Weileder, 2013: 93). Having emphasised our knowledge that 'everything is in a permanent state of flux', with reference to both theoretical physics and the economic climate, Weileder implies that a map delineating only the static aspects of a particular location will no longer suffice (Weileder, 2013: 93). The *atlas-project* suggests that both conventional photography and conventional cartography are essentially inadequate.

Figure 5.4 Wolfgang Weileder, *Piazza San Pietro, Rome, Slice 1756*, 2010, from the *Atlas* series, 2011–present. Archival inkjet print, 140 x 22cm © Wolfgang Weileder (courtesy of Wolfgang Weileder). This figure has not been made available under a CC licence. Permission to reproduce it must be sought from the copyright holder.

Unlike Sugimoto's work, Weileder presents a consistent interest in the bustling change and fleeting presence of human temporality. His digital method, however, suggests that the conventional photograph does not fully capture the integration of this transience with space itself. Each 'map' within the *Atlas* series is accompanied by a key detailing the exact geographical location of Weileder's camera, along with information about what was happening in front of the lens, however extraordinary or mundane (see Figure 5.5). The artist has positioned his camera and stayed with it for an extended period of time in order to extract and then add together the 'slices' of everyday life that unfurled in front of him. It is possible to trace the movements of buses or of crowds across both place and time, so that the image is not a record of one instant, but a 'waterfall display' of space across time.

The implication that the photograph's work on its own is in some way insufficient is also present in Weileder's earlier work. If the *Atlas* and *Seascapes* series present a form of digital addition to the photograph's traces, then the photographs that form part of the *Transfer* (2006) and the *House* projects (2002–2004) present a similar desire to extend photography's temporal reach, but in analogue terms. As a trace of a transient process, these photographs were made using a very long exposure – sometimes ten days – so that the construction and deconstruction of Weileder's building projects is rendered as a ghostly half-presence

Figure 5.5 Wolfgang Weileder, *Atlas*, exhibition view, Northern Gallery for Contemporary Art, 2013 © Wolfgang Weileder (courtesy of Wolfgang Weileder). This figure has not been made available under a CC licence. Permission to reproduce it must be sought from the copyright holder.

against the more definite blacks and whites of the surrounding environment (see Figure 5.6). As well as sharing the artist's concern with architecture and public place, both the *Transfer* and *Atlas* series reveal a motivation to extend photography's splicing of space and time: both space over time, and time over space. The photograph emerges in these artworks as a tool which must itself be constructed or deconstructed or both, in order to locate a sense of duration.

Given that the temporality of the photograph has long been a compelling source of intrigue for the medium's commentators, Weileder's desire to develop further its relationship between time and space perhaps reflects a wider shift in the relationship between the two that has been identified by current writers including David Harvey and Paul Virilio. In the 1930s, Walter Benjamin famously suggested that all timescales strangely coalesce within the photograph:

no matter how artful the photographer, no matter how carefully posed his subject, the beholder feels an irresistible urge to search such a picture for the tiny spark of contingency, of the here and now, with which reality has (so to speak) seared the subject, to find the inconspicuous spot where in the immediacy of that long-forgotten moment the future nests so eloquently that we, looking back, may rediscover it. (Benjamin, 1999a: 510)

Figure 5.6 Wolfgang Weileder, *House-Madrid*, 2004. Gelatine silver print, 79 x 100cm © Wolfgang Weileder (courtesy of Wolfgang Weileder). This figure has not been made available under a CC licence. Permission to reproduce it must be sought from the copyright holder.

The trace of the photograph, its indexical nature as described by Susan Sontag's analogies of a 'death mask' or 'footprint', presents viewers with a mysterious conflation of past, present and future: we seek out the 'now' of a past moment in order to *rediscover* a previous future (Sontag, 1979: 154). Benjamin's delight in such a magical overcoming of time's linearity is evident in his discussion of David Octavius Hill and Robert Adamson's photograph of Mrs Elizabeth Hall:

with photography, however, [in contrast to painting] we encounter something new and strange: in Hill's Newhaven fishwife [...] there remains something that cannot be silenced, that fills you with an unruly desire to know what her name was, the woman who was alive there, who even now is still real and will never consent to be wholly absorbed in 'art'. (Benjamin, 1999a: 510)

Even if accepting Mary Price's criticism that Benjamin 'has a talent for characterising a still photograph as a narrative, implying the beginning and end of a

situation by his dramatic figuration of the middle', it is clear from Benjamin's use of tenses in his reading of the photograph that past, present and future are nestled deeply into the image: 'was', 'is' and 'will be' are simultaneously overlaid onto each other (Price, 1994: 40). As Eduardo Cadava has noted, Benjamin suggests elsewhere that the photograph is 'an image in which the Then and the Now come together, in a flash of lightning, in a constellation. In other words, an image is dialectics at a standstill' (Cadava, 1997: 64). In this attempt to understand the temporality of photography, Benjamin is of course not alone; Roland Barthes' reading of the 'anterior future' of the image presents his grappling with the tenses through which to discuss photography's own 'writing with light' (Barthes, 1984: 96).

Indeed, just as Weileder's practice suggests a fascination with the intersection of time and space, so Benjamin suggests that every photograph presents 'space-crossed time'. If the photographic image is 'dialectics at a standstill', then, according to Cadava:

it interrupts history and opens up another possibility of history, one that spaces time and temporalises space. A force of arrest, the image translates an aspect of time into a certain space, and does so without stopping time, or without preventing time from being time. Within the photograph, time presents itself to us as this 'spacing'. (Cadava, 1997: 61)

Cadava reads Benjamin's concept of 'space-crossed time' as 'time-becoming-space and space-becoming-time' (Cadava, 1997: 61). In a reading of time that is very evocative of Weileder's *Transfer* and *House* projects, and the photographic remembering of a continual process of building and un-building, Cadava suggests that:

what is spaced here [...] are the always becoming and disappearing moments of time itself. It is precisely this continual process of becoming and disappearing that, for Benjamin, characterises the movement of time. Speaking of Proust, in a passage that asks us to think about the relation between time and space, he writes: 'the eternity that Proust opens to view is space-crossed time, not limitless time. His true interest concerns the passage of time in its most real, that is, its *space-crossed* figure'. (Cadava, 1997: 61, original emphasis)

Proust's writing attempts to represent an experience of time in which the present is occasionally interrupted; and where a space abuts the flow of duration that, in its continuous form, it could not contain. Photographs also present space-crossed time. Cadava describes the 'moment of the photographic event' then as an 'abbreviation that telescopes history into a moment – an abbreviation

or miniaturisation that tells us that history can end or break off' (Cadava, 1997: 63). It is this very telescoping that Sugimoto attempts to overcome through his static images of apparently eternal subjects, and that Weileder avoids by expanding the photographic 'abbreviation'.

It is notable that both contemporary artists' experiments with photography's nexus of time and space coincide both with philosophies about the shifting contemporary experience of space-time, and with radical changes in the experience of photography as a medium *per se*. David Harvey's influential analysis has claimed that from the mid nineteenth-century, 'capitalism became embroiled in an incredible phase of massive long-term investment in the conquest of space' (Harvey, 1989: 264). The advent of new technologies, such as the telegraph, radio communication, and of course photography, ran alongside the development of rail travel and steam shipping which sparked a 'subduing of space' and a crisis in the experienced relationship of time and space (Harvey, 1989: 265). Harvey argues that as the new century veered towards the First World War, an annihilation of space through time, increasingly reflected in modernist art and literature such as that of Picasso, Braque, Joyce and Proust, reached crisis point. Just as Benjamin discusses Proust's writing in his concept of 'space-crossed time', so Harvey suggests that Proust's attempt to 'recover past time [...] rested on a conception of experience across a space of time' that was a reaction to the contemporary destruction of space at the hands of increased speed (Harvey, 1989: 267). Harvey diagnoses this capitalist-fuelled modernist transformation in the relationship between time and space as 'time-space compression', and notes that the second, intensive round of it emerged with postmodernism (Harvey, 1989: 283).

This latest period of the 'time-space compression' is identified by Harvey as 'an intense phase' that has had a 'disorienting and disruptive impact upon political-economic practices, the balance of class power, as well as upon cultural and social life' (Harvey, 1989: 284). Harvey claimed that new technologies and organisational forms have accelerated levels of production, exchange and consumption, in turn encouraging the development of globalised mass markets which overcome spatial barriers. The effects of this system, he argued, have been an emphasis upon 'the values and virtues of instantaneity [...] and of disposability' (Harvey, 1989: 286). Harvey's argument is now well known and discussion of its influence has not abated with the decline of postmodernism itself. As the acceleration of globalised capitalism continues, the impact of time-space compression is still declared to be increasingly significant. Paul Virilio has also claimed that our sense of distance has been 'polluted' at the hands of real-time technologies and faster transport and communication devices (Virilio 1997: 58). Most recently in his book *The Futurism of the Instant: Stop-Eject*, Virilio has argued

that 'the instant dominates all duration' (Virilio, 2010: 91). The implication is that technological advances – themselves often aimed at projects of endless mapping – alter our experience of both time and space, and in doing so alter our understanding of both past and present:

let's go back for a moment to the perspective of real time offered by ubiquity, of which Google Earth is just one aspect among others, to this very particular relief that affects not only our subjective and interpersonal relationships, but further, and especially, our connection to the world. With habituation to multiple screens, the focus of the visual field diverts us from peripheral vision, from the open field that gave its everyday fullness to the real space of the verges of our activities and, as a result, causes disorientation in being-there. The teleobjective proximity of transmission tools thereby considerably alters our grasp of the surrounding environment in which each of us physically evolves. (Virilio, 2010: 80–81)

Our horizon line – both temporal and spatial as figured in Weileder's crossed *Seascapes* – is distorted by the ubiquitous screens which allow us to zoom in and out of virtual versions of real-times and spaces. So it is, claims Virilio, that 'historic time' is accelerated to the point at which duration succumbs to the omnipresent instant, thereby enacting an 'assault' on memory:

this is indeed one of the unacknowledged aspects of globalisation of a real time that subverts not only the real space of the geography of the globe, but also our relationship to time that is really present, since we know from experience: 'it's always questioning the present that causes us to question the past'. (Virilio, 2010: 91–92)

For Virilio, then, 'whether we are dealing with the infinitely big of historicity or the infinitely small of instantaneity', this new lack of experienced duration is a fearful and disorientating condition (Virilio, 2010: 100). Benjamin (1999a: 519) suggested photography captures a 'strange weave of space and time'. Cadava suggests, however, that photography is inextricable from history – 'there can be no thinking of history that is not at the same time a thinking of photography' (Cadava, 1997: xviii). These contrasting views are entirely connected to the acceleration process which Virilio bemoans. Our screens are infiltrated with photographs, our maps constructed out of them, and as they are used in social media sites online, our identities are increasingly shrunk to fit them. Weileder's *Atlas*, in its insistence on adding to the photograph, on splicing time and space together beyond the conventional photographic process, suggests that photography, *per se*, is no longer understood as a 'strange weave of space and time', but is rather a contributing factor to our lack of understanding of physical time or space. Weileder's additions to the photographic process reinforce that crossed

Figure 5.7 Screen grab from Google Maps, December 2014. Imagery © 2014 Aerodata International Surveys, DigitalGlobe, The Geoinformation Group | InterAtlas, Map data © 2014 Cybercity, Google. This figure has not been made available under a CC licence. Permission to reproduce it must be sought from the copyright holder.

horizon line of space and time that is made visible in the *Seascapes* series: a reassertion of space-crossed time and time-crossed space in an increasingly virtual experience in which those coordinates are rarely mapped over each other. Indeed, even when these coordinates are argued to coexist in digital maps that constantly update according to the user's location, the result is a highly individualised and 'performed' one; Weileder's *Atlas* offers instead a rare shared representation of time overlaid with (public) space which allows sustained and reflective study² (see Figures 5.7 and 5.8).

Virilio's argument is certainly pessimistic, and discussion of digital mapping often veers between excitement and concern. In 2009, geographers Paul Kingsbury and John Paul Jones III diagnosed a field which they saw as clearly divided, in a Nietzschean form, between an Apollonian, Adorno-esque fearfulness and dystopia on the one hand, and a Dionysian, hopeful, democratising, participatory vision on the other. Within such a division, Kingsbury and Jones positioned both Benjamin's writing and Google Earth itself, within the latter camp. The nervousness and cynicism which they detect in a conservative approach is contrasted with the much more attractive mix of a Benjaminian giddiness of childhood, love of wandering, and an interest in Surrealism, montage and intoxication (Kingsbury and Jones, 2009: 503). Within this context, Kingsbury and Jones argue that Google Earth actually 'affirms our senses of belonging and our longing to belong' (Kingsbury and Jones, 2009: 510). Certainly contemporary artists have maximised Google Maps' potential to be used in alternative ways to those of traditional map-reading, which often highlight the eruption of idiosyncrasy or even opposition within the flat

Figure 5.8 Wolfgang Weileder, *Place des Vosges, Paris, Slice 2356*, 2012, from the *Atlas* series, 2011–present. Archival inkjet print, 137 x 233cm © Wolfgang Weileder (courtesy of Wolfgang Weileder). This figure has not been made available under a CC licence. Permission to reproduce it must be sought from the copyright holder.

recording of the Google camera. Jon Rafman's *The Nine Eyes of Google Street View* (2008–ongoing), for example, famously revealed the artist's search for unusual, beautiful, humorous or illicit moments unwittingly captured by Google's all-seeing eyes (Rafman, 2011; see Figure 5.9). Through the use of screen grabs, his artwork not only isolated and elevated particular Google-generated images from around the world, but in doing so posed questions about which – and how – people, things, places and moments are awarded significance (Rafman, 2011: 7). In this sense, Rafman's project, certainly Dionysian in nature – to use Kingsbury and Jones' analysis – overlaps with some of Weileder's concerns: both artists emphasise the experiential aspect of inhabiting a place at a particular time, and their work serves to disturb or interrupt a distanced, uniform use of 'map as information source'. However, while Rafman's technique of appropriation reveals the persistent visibility of the unexpected or under-represented within Google Street View, Weileder has created his own images and his own *Atlas*, in order to address what he has called 'a dilemma of our time' – how to give ourselves 'anchor points' in a world dominated by scientific and economic flux (Weileder, 2013: 93). This is because for Weileder, 'a map can't reveal how a space is animated by people, weather and light. Our memories and imagined constructions of spaces don't resemble maps' (Weileder, 2013: 93). Even when Rafman highlights the Dionysian animation of Google Street View, his artwork still presents the view of a split-second camera shutter, rather than

Figure 5.9 Jon Rafman, *D52, Blaru, France*, 2011 from *The Nine Eyes of Google Street View* © Jon Rafman (courtesy of Jon Rafman). This figure has not been made available under a CC licence. Permission to reproduce it must be sought from the copyright holder.

a built-up and changing memory or experience of a place. Rafman's artwork is reflective of the view of a Google tourist, a Street View surfer; Weileder's is that of a viewer anchored in one space over a period of time, rooted to the ground as slices of time tick past.

Both Weileder and Rafman have created physical art objects that do not deny a Dionysian aspect to online maps and the photography that is used within them. However, each of them also presents deep concerns with these forms of map. Rafman worries about the tendency for Google's cameras to fall upon 'the poor and the marginalised', and sees the artist's role as challenging 'Google's imperial claims' and its 'right to be the only one framing our cognitions and perceptions' (Rafman, 2011: 7). Conversely, Weileder, as I am arguing here, implies that an experience of 'space-crossed time' is absent from such projects. Notably, these critiques do not necessarily place either artist, nor this argument, within the dystopian and fearful category which Kingsbury and Jones outline and dismiss. As a by-product of their argument, Kingsbury and Jones suggest an implicit criticism of interpreting works of art 'as evidence about the societies that made them' – this being a quotation they use from Tim Dean. Instead, they argue for the 'obdurate mystery of cultural and aesthetic artefacts' (Kingsbury and Jones, 2009: 510). In this regard, their snubbing of

conservatism seems to break down, as the delights of that which is 'untranslatable to meaning' – another quotation from Dean – take over (Kingsbury and Jones, 2009: 510). This sounds far from Benjaminian, given his famous desire to break free from a ritualistic, cult-valuation of the art object and to instead see it reconfigured within politics (Benjamin, 1999b: 218). While Kingsbury and Jones make a strong case for the Benjaminian, and Dionysian, approach to Google Earth, in the process they risk undermining the value of critique and even of warning, from which Benjamin himself was never afraid to shy away. Weileder's *Atlas* shows no such fear; it is both reflective on the part of the artist and demanding on the part of the viewer in its relationship to contemporary photography and its use within digital maps.

Time-crossed space

If Weileder's photographic practice emphasises a Benjaminian space-crossed time, his sculptural and installation work presents a similar interest in time-crossed space. Weileder has made many works which map one representation onto another, often (pre)figuring different times and histories across particular spaces. The 2009 installation *Skydeck* consisted of a life-sized reconstruction of the cafe from the next-door Gateshead carpark – a structure that became infamous after its role in the film *Get Carter* – crossing floors and walls in the Workplace gallery after the carpark's demolition. Resting upon scaffolding, and clearly impermanent, the reconstruction was nevertheless clearly identifiable, with the curved corners of the cafe window frames providing a haunting living memory of a former present. The physical space, planned as a home for coffee-drinkers, used as a set for film stars, and recently eradicated, is revived in its new coordinates thanks to Weileder's practice. The Workplace gallery became a space crossed with different times, drawing viewers' attention to the physicality of their memories and the temporality of their present.

Other projects, such as *Le Terme* in Milan, 2008, also present a resurrected former building in a public space (see Figure 5.11). *Le Terme* saw the continual construction and deconstruction of a full-scale replica of the Diurno Venezea, a 1930s public bath-house that was situated underneath the Piazza Oberdan. The process was captured on photographic film with one very long exposure. As with *Skydeck*, the ghostly emergence of a former present is striking, in part, because of its crossing of time with space: an area which had seen the bathing of hundreds of now long-departed people is made to co-exist in the present with current Milanese inhabitants and shoppers: times coalesce in the same space. There are resonances with other ambitious artistic projects concerned with

Figure 5.10 Wolfgang Weileder, *Skydeck*, 2009, installation in the Workplace Gallery, Gateshead © Wolfgang Weileder (courtesy of Wolfgang Weileder). This figure has not been made available under a CC licence. Permission to reproduce it must be sought from the copyright holder.

memory and lived space: Rachel Whiteread's cast objects, rooms and even an entire *House* (1993) also offer a poignancy of past merging with present, and Elizabeth Wright's *Installation, Bungalow Showroom Gallery* (1996), an immaculate replica of a planned but never realised home, presents a similar life-sized rendering of different timescales, realising a future that was intended but never built. Weileder's installations provide a sculptural, spatial rendering of his photographic processes: a desire to infiltrate lived space and time with each other, and to present an experience that is neither the 'infinitely big of historicity nor the infinitely small of instantaneity' (Wells, 2013b: 105), but rather the life-size nature of duration.

Indeed, the scale of Weileder's projects demonstrates a consistent preoccupation with the life-size. The 2012 *Res Publica* continued the artist's concern with public space and architecture while also investigating the relationship between space and time. Weileder first designed and made a silver leaflet-stand, mirroring the Palladian architecture of Washington's Supreme Court of Justice (see

Figure 5.11 Wolfgang Weileder, *La Terme, Piazza Oberdan, Milan*, 2008 © Wolfgang Weileder (courtesy of Wolfgang Weileder). This figure has not been made available under a CC licence. Permission to reproduce it must be sought from the copyright holder.

Figure 5.12). The leaflet-stand, similar in concept to those offering information on real estate, offered passers-by a free sheet containing the plans for a cardboard scale model of the Supreme Court. In effect, Weileder's leaflet-stand, positioned on a street corner by Cass Gilbert's imposing Palladian building, offered people in Washington the opportunity to create their own cardboard Supreme Court at a scale of 1:50. Local art students created some models from the plans, which were then positioned at key points throughout the city and left to the elements. Over time, the human scaled-models became battered, crumpled and damp. Some were removed, others left slumped around the city, their cardboard Beaux-Arts pillars buckling under the effects of both time and bad weather (see Figure 5.13).

In its conjunction of two very different architectures – the symbolic power of a vast building constructed to house and distribute justice, and the human-scaled, fragile and vulnerable cover for a sheltering body – *Res Publica* posed pointed questions about the nature of justice and freedom in a Western society in which many live without a home (Wells, 2012: 77–89). That it did so through miniaturising the Supreme Court to a human-scaled model, is key. The Supreme Court, vast as it is, is primarily symbolic, a façade demonstrating corrective

Figure 5.12 Wolfgang Weileder, *Res Publica*, 2012, 5x5 Public Art Festival, Washington DC © Wolfgang Weileder (courtesy of Wolfgang Weileder). This figure has not been made available under a CC licence. Permission to reproduce it must be sought from the copyright holder.

power and supreme authority. The bodily-sized cardboard version is much closer to lived experience, marking the spatial limits of our physical existence, as well as our temporal vulnerability to decay.³ While the architecture of the Supreme Court looks back to a historic Greek past and claims its indelible vast placement in the present, in the model, real-time and real-scale are overlaid. To use Virilio's terms, here again, Weileder draws attention away both from the mighty grandeur and the 'infinitely big of historicity', and from the weightless flippancy and the 'infinitely small of instantaneity' (Wells, 2013b: 105). The focus is again on a time-crossed space, and an embodied experience of duration that, in the case of homelessness as the crumpled cardboard eloquently suggests, is not represented justly either in the grand permanence of our national historic symbols or in the flashes of representation that flicker within a feed of fast-flowing information.

That Weileder's work spans both photography and sculpture is perhaps a natural accompaniment for this sustained interest in the relationship between space and time. His 2002 project in Kielder Water and Forest Park, UK, brings both aspects of his practice together; creating a sculpture that could photograph. *Camera* (2002) consisted of two blue large-scale tents, one turned on

Figure 5.13 Wolfgang Weileder, *Res Publica*, 2012, 5x5 Public Art Festival, Washington DC © Wolfgang Weileder (courtesy of Wolfgang Weileder). This figure has not been made available under a CC licence. Permission to reproduce it must be sought from the copyright holder.

its head and intersected with the other (see Figures 5.14 and 5.15). While the grounded tent functioned as a viewing space, the upturned one was transformed into a camera obscura, with mirrors positioned inside so as to turn the resulting image at the same angle as that of the tent. Given the artificial nature of the Northumberland park, Weileder's manipulation of the natural 'trick' of nature to 'reproduce itself', as early pioneers described photography, resonates with the long-discussed 'naturalness' or artificiality of photography as a medium.⁴ The effect for viewers entering the first tent would be to imagine a shift in their own ground, as the environment around them seemed tilted to the jaunty angle of the second tent. Accompanying this disorientation, though, is an overlapping, a mapping onto each other, of significant coordinates in time and space, and in sculpture and photography. Here the human shelter, the bodily tent, is at one and the same time the camera, the room of the image. Three-dimensional, liveable space is itself the producer of the image on the screen, an image that reflects the real-time duration unfolding in the physical environment beyond. Duration and location are united: space crosses time and time crosses space.

Figure 5.14 Wolfgang Weileder, *Camera*, 2002 © Wolfgang Weileder (courtesy of Wolfgang Weileder). This figure has not been made available under a CC licence. Permission to reproduce it must be sought from the copyright holder.

Figure 5.15 Wolfgang Weileder, *Camera*, 2002. Fabric, aluminium, optics, 220 x 780 x 420cm © Wolfgang Weileder (courtesy of Wolfgang Weileder). This figure has not been made available under a CC licence. Permission to reproduce it must be sought from the copyright holder.

Weileder's work, then, from site-specific installation to digital photographic composite, resists both the infinitely big and the infinitely small, just as it resists the fixity of historicism and the fleeting nature of the instant. As such, it suggests that the conventional time-space coordinates of both photography and public space are no longer adequate in relaying, or reminding us, of the nature of 'space-crossed time'. In the context of a society increasingly distracted by the omnipresent instant of the image, Weileder's work suggests that the former auratic weave of space and time within both photographs and memories of places is miniaturised, reducing time and space to flattened, static images. Instead, Weileder's work demonstrates the need to construct, to extend, to build upon, current experience, thereby offering a renewed experience of space-crossed time.

In this respect, Weileder's practice echoes another of Benjamin's key ideas about photography – that 'constructive' rather than 'creative' photography is necessary in order to 'reveal anything about reality' (Benjamin, 1999a: 526). While the 'creative' detaches itself from 'physiognomic, political and scientific interest', and ends up merely 'capitulating to fashion' or advertising, 'constructive' photography recognises that 'something must be built up, something artificial, posed' in order to communicate meaning (Benjamin, 1999a: 526). For Benjamin, of course, this meaning is often that of the historical materialist, who searches for the reification of human relations to be made explicit. Weileder's photography, and indeed his sculpture, suggest both such a constructed, built nature, and also an acknowledgement of this aspect of their condition. For Benjamin, 'constructive' photography, that which is given to 'experiment and instruct' rather than to 'charm or persuade', is of most value (Benjamin, 1999a: 526). It leads him to close his 'Little history of photography' essay with László Moholy-Nagy's foresight that 'the illiteracy of the future will be ignorance not of reading or writing, but of photography' (Benjamin, 1999a: 527). Weileder's constructive photography and installation suggest that the contemporary capitalist culture of the instant image is producing a form of illiteracy in terms of experiencing and understanding the nexus between time and space. Further, his work remembers and reminds viewers of an existence in the here and now of public space which, as Virilio argues, can affect our social and ontological activity as much as our individual experience (Virilio, 2010: 80). Weileder's artwork to date then, with its overlapping cross of time and space, pinpoints the intersection of the real-time and the life-size. In the *atlas-project* and throughout his oeuvre, Weileder constructs a contemporary conception of space-crossed time that is determinedly human-scaled, and which, in unmasking the distractions of instantaneous creative images, offers unsentimental reference points for locating our own spatio-temporal condition.

Notes

- 1 Aspects of this chapter were published in Wells (2013b).
- 2 Nanna Verhoeff has suggested that mobile digital cartography enables a shift from the representation to the performance of space. She notes that in the process, the potential pitfalls of representation are avoided, and the viewer is repositioned as central (Bounegru, 2009).
- 3 Weileder's interest in working to a 1:1 scale places him within a contemporary trend of artwork exploring the effects of scale (Wells, 2013a).
- 4 In 1839, Louis Daguerre famously described his invention of the Daguerreotype as a means by which 'nature' could 'reproduce herself'.

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